

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, December 20, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to her husband, Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Dec. 20th (1904???) My dear Alec:

We are passing along the Balearic Isles now. Dreary, bare mountains they are with scarce a sign of life or vegetation above low scrubs that look like moss at this distance. It seems to afford the passengers considerable amusement to hear that there is a railroad on this lonely desolate barren Majorca. The sight of them makes me homesick for our own smiling, gentle Beinn Bhreagh whose mild attempt of precipices seems very mild and harmless indeed beside these butting cliffs. You will see them yourself before long, however, I hope and I am going to send my chart of the Mediterranean to Gibraltar to await your arrival there. Be sure you come this way. I am sure you will find it much pleasanter than a more northern route and beside the people here are much more lenient in the matter of breakfast than those of any other ship I was ever on. I saw one belated individual taking his breakfast on a napkin spread on a side table at eleven o'clock this morning. I was very much impressed by Gibraltar and have written your mother about it and I wanted awfully to run across to Africa — it seemed but just a step.

I think Mr. Goode is lovely, he has been just as kind and thoughtful as possible and we are beginning to understand each other better. I have been unfortunate in not being able to understand most of the people when they spoke to me and I have had no heart to try and make friends, but lately I have spoken more to one or two. I have found out how much I depended on my friends to open the way for me with strangers.

Mr. Goode is going to the Hotel de Genes with us, but will only stay a couple of days. I see him now studying his Baedeker and going to sleep over it. Mrs. Goode says they do not know exactly when they are going or how — that Mr. Goode, bound all his daily life by

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fixed rules and duties, now thinks it his greatest pleasure not to know one day what he will do the next.

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I think Mr. Behr ought to share the expenses of my cablegram from Gibraltar. I asked him if it were any more expensive cabling from there than from Genoa and he assured me positively that it was not. Well I had to pay at the rate of 60 cents a word when the Italian rate is only 37 to Washington and 34 to Nova Scotia. Fancy it. Nova Scotia so far out of our American world is nearer to the European than Washington or Philadelphia. Your cable at Gibraltar was a great comfort telling me that I was not forgotten and to one at least I am not a mere insignificant unit among many more interesting ones. Do not fail to bring an opera glass. I have had to borrow Mr. Goode's disgracefully often.

With much love my dear, As ever yours, Mabel